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Monday, March 9, 2026
Regular Board Meeting - 6:30 pm
Anderson 3 Administrative Offices

The Anderson School District Three Board of Trustees met in regular session on Monday, March 9, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. in the Boardroom of the Administrative Offices located in Iva, South Carolina. Those present were Mr. Watt (Chairman), Mrs. Arnold (Secretary), Mr. Holbrook, Mr. Bouknight, and Mr. Burdette.

Mr. Watt called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. An invocation by Rev. Tony Smith was offered.

AGENDA & MINUTES

Mr. Holbrook made a motion to approve the March board agenda as written. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Bouknight made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, with a minor modification to rearrange the order of the vote to exit executive session. Mr. Burdette seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Commendations and Recognitions

Anderson 3 Robotics Students

Superintendent Hipp formally recognized students and staff for their outstanding robotics accomplishments, highlighting their recent awards and contributions.

Starr Elementary's Tigerbots team of Luke Eubanks, Sophie McAlister, Draven Moore, Josie May White, and Warden Taylor received the Core Value Award at the Qualifier Tournament and the Robot Design Award at the Regional Tournament. Mrs. Tonya Fowler, their team leader, was recognized as the FIRST LEGO League State Championship Coach/Mentor of the Year.

The VEX Stars Team from Starr Elementary earned the Judges' Award at a qualifier tournament and placed 6th overall in the Skills Challenge. Students recognized included: Connor Brown, Kase Huff, Wyatt McAllister, Brynlee Moore, Willow Pendleton, and Dillan Sanchez. Ms. Delissa McCall coaches the VEX Starrs.

Team Tigers (26263) from Starr-Iva Middle School was recognized for earning the Create Award in the VEX V5 Competition. Students included: Jack Gray, Griffin Smith, Bentley Smith, Audrey Kate Bolt, Chloe O'Barr, and Jayren Wrenn.

TOTS BOTS (Team 29684) from Starr-Iva was recognized for a 4th place overall finish, 2nd place in Skills, and the Build Award at the AIT Regional Tournament, as well as qualifying for the 2026 SC VEX IQ Robotics Competition. Students included: Justin Norris, Sophie McAlister, Savannah Sanders, Zadden Hatten, Brody Becker, James Landon Wages, Sarah Lowe-Raudales, and Jocelyn Hayes. Mrs. Johnie Cape is the coach/advisor for both SIMS teams.

The Flat Rock Elementary Tigresses were recognized for a 3rd Place at the VEX IQ State Competition, Innovate Award at the State Competition, and Build Award and Sportsmanship Award at the AIT Competition. Students Emma Silvers, Abigail Elmore, Sky Brookshire, and Adele Savca were recognized.

The Flat Rock Tigers (Team 2730B) earned 2nd Place at the VEX IQ State Championship and the Judges Award at the State Championship. Students recognized included: Jace Kyle, Luke Burdette, and Haiden Cullen. Lisa Bradford, coach of the Flat Rock teams, was also recognized as the advisor of the 2026 VEX IQ state-placing teams.

Tigers Archery Team

Students were recognized as Tigers Archery State Qualifiers, including: Madelyn Weaghington, Emmilyn Gurley, Finn Bots, Liam Burdette, Ryder Stone, Rylan Weaghington, William Mulherin, Jackson Fowler, and Ava Ware. Mr. Austin Powell is the coach for the Tigers Archery Team.

Bus Driver of the Month

Superintendent Hipp recognized Ina Robinson as the February Bus Driver of the Month.

Ms. Robinson was commended for her many years of dedicated service and her commitment to student safety and well-being. It was noted that she consistently goes above and beyond in her role and demonstrates a deep care for the students she serves.

Board Member Recognition

Mr. Tripp Bouknight was recognized for earning Level 6, the highest distinction, through the South Carolina School Boards Association Boardmanship Institute.

This level requires over 300 points in professional development, completion of advanced training, and passing a comprehensive assessment. Superintendent Hipp noted that this is a significant accomplishment and reflects Mr. Bouknight's commitment to board leadership and governance.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no Citizens' Comments this evening.

REPORTS

Financial Reports

Mr. Moore presented the General Fund financial report through the end of February, noting that revenues exceeded expenditures by $2,669,627, underscoring the district's strong financial health. Revenues from property taxes are trending ahead of budget and are projected to exceed expectations by approximately $375,000 to $400,000.

Mr. Burdette asked about what was driving the increase in the purchase services line item over the last couple of years. Mr. Moore explained that this year, the district has contracted with a 3rd-party service for classroom substitutes. This moves that budget from the general fund to purchase services.

Mr. Holbrook and Mrs. Arnold both asked for clarification of the cost increase of classroom substitutes and what better "coverage" meant. Mr. Moore stated that, while it is hard to track, compared to scheduling substitutes in-house as the district has done in the past, the principals have reported that the 3rd party has been able to cover more classroom openings this school year than in prior years. This results in less strain on school resources, such as classroom splits and pulling employees from other positions, but does cause a slight increase in the cost of substitute coverage. Mr. Watt asked about attracting retirees to be substitute teachers. Mr. Moore stated that ESS pays subs weekly and can share employees across other Anderson County Districts, making the role more attractive.

Mr. Moore stated the district had yet to receive the February Penny Sales Tax Collection, but expects it to be the highest of the year, based on historical collection data. He provided updates on the ongoing state-level budget development and discussed factors that may impact planning

for the upcoming fiscal year, including state funding adjustments and projected expenditures. The district is closely monitoring ongoing considerations and developments at the state level. He stated that the district's main budget priorities for 26-27 are to support special education services staff and contracted services needs, address school needs, be cognizant of any changes to federal funding, and employee compensation.

Mrs. Arnold asked about the stability of federal funding to Mr. Moore's point about shrinking CTE and other federal funding sources. Mrs. Hipp added that while the district may continue to see decreases in federal funding due to poverty, superintendents have been made to feel confident that funds will not be completely stripped.

Mrs. Arnold asked Mr. Moore about the upcoming budget projections, and Mrs. Hipp added that the 26-27 budget is being constructed with no plan to request an operational millage increase this year. She commented that the district hasn't done so in 3 years and does not plan to do so this year.

Action Items

Cybersecurity Policy – First Reading

The policy committee recommended the Cybersecurity and Information Security Awareness Policy (EH) for first reading. Board members discussed several considerations, including: defining financial fraud within the policy, establishing clear board notification procedures for cybersecurity incidents, and clarifying incident definitions and reporting expectations. Following the discussion and the policy committee's motion, the policy was approved on first reading by unanimous vote.

Cybersecurity Administrative Rule – First Reading

The policy committee also recommended the accompanying Cybersecurity Administrative Rule for first reading. The administrative rule was seconded and approved on first reading by unanimous vote.

Mr. Holbrook made a motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters related to administrative recommendations and contracts. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Bouknight motioned, and Mr. Holbrook seconded, and the motion carried 5–0 to come out of executive session.

Upon returning to open session, Mr. Burdette made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation of Certified Candidates A and B for employment in the 2026-2027 school year. Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Bouknight made a motion that the Board accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the re-employment of certified personnel at the designated contract level for the 2026–2027 school year, as presented. Mr. Burdette seconded the motion, and it passed 5–0.

ADJOURN

Mrs. Arnold motioned, and Mr. Holbrook seconded, and the motion passed 5–0 to adjourn the meeting.

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Chairman Secretary